

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 05472 151722Z

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ACTION MC-02

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R 140718Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6382

UNCLAS CANBERRA 5472

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR MRN (5472 VICE 6382)

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: MILI, AS

SUBJ: LAWS GOVERNING FIREARMS IMPORTATION

REF: STATE 177789

1. DEPARTMENT OF POLICE AND CUSTOMS HAS PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ON THIS SUBJECT.

(A) AMMUNITION. IMPORTATION OF ALL AMMO .22 CAL. AND GREATER IS CONTROLLED UNDER PROVISION OF THE CUSTOMS (PROHIBITED IMPORTS) REGULATIONS. IN THEORY, ALL IMPORTATIONS ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL OF MINISTER FOR POLICE AND CUSTOMS. HOWEVER, CUSTOMS OFFICIALS WILL RELEASE AMMO ON PRESENTATION OF LETTER OF AUTHORITY FROM STATE AUTHORITIES (USUALLY STATE POLICE DEPARTMENT). NO CONTROLS ARE PLACED ON AMMO LESS THAN .22 CAL.

(B) FIREARMS. ALL IMPORTS OF FIREARMS ARE SUBJECT TO SAFETY TESTING WHICH IS CARRIED OUT BY AUSTRALIA POLICE FORCE. IF FIREARMS FAIL SAFETY TEST, AN ATTEMPT CAN BE MADE TO BRING THEM UP TO STANDARD, FAILING THAT THEY ARE EITHER SEIZED AND DESTROYED OR RE-EXPORTED. IN THE CASE OF CONTINUING COMMERCIAL SHIPMENTS, TESTING IS USUALLY DONE AT RANDOM. ALL IMPORTS BY INDIVIDUALS ARE SAFETY TESTED. BEFORE PISTOLS ARE RELEASED BY CUSTOMS, IMPORTER MUST PRODUCE PERMIT INDICATING POSSESSION BY HIM OF PISTOL IS AUTHORIZED BY COMPETENT STATE AUTHORITIES IN UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 CANBER 05472 151722Z

HIS STATE OF RESIDENCE. IN THE CASE OF RIFLES .22 CAL AND GREATER,

LAWS DIFFER FROM STATE TO STATE. HOWEVER, ALL STATES WITH THE EXCEPTION OF QUEENSLAND, REQUIRE ALL OWNERS (INCLUDING COMMERCIAL IMPORTERS) OF RIFLES TO OBTAIN LICENSES AND CUSTOMS WOULD NOT RELEASE RIFLE WITHOUT PRESENTATION OF LICENSE. NO RESTRICTION IS PLACED ON THE RELEASE OF RIFLES WITH LESS THAN .22 CAL. (PROVIDED, OF COURSE, THEY PASS SAFETY TEST).

2. REQUIREMENTS FOR OBTAINING LICENSES VARY WIDELY FROM STATE TO STATE. EMBASSY IS OBTAINING COPIES OF STATE FIREARMS ACTS AND WILL POUCH THESE AS SOON AS RECEIVED.

3. DISPOSITION OF FIREARMS AFTER IMPORTATION IS AGAIN CONTROLLED BY STATE AUTHORITIES. IN MOST STATES GUN DEALERS ARE REQUIRED TO RECORD SALES BUT NOT TO REPORT SALES UNLESS REQUESTED.

4. RE QUESTION RAISED PARA 2, IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE FOR AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT TO ISSUE ANY DOCUMENT PRIOR TO EXPORTATION FROM THE U.S., AS DECISION TO ALLOW IMPORT IS MADE ONLY AFTER THE FIREARM ARRIVES, I.E. AFTER IT PASSES SAFETY TESTING ETC.

5. EMBASSY WILL FORWARD IN NEXT FEW DAYS, PAMPHLETS PROVIDED BY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE AND CUSTOMS ON SAFETY TESTING.
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